



CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

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California State Legislature Recognizes Day Of Remembrance

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Asian & Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus joins many Californians today in recognizing the Day of Remembrance. Assemblymember Mike Eng (D – Monterey Park) presented Assembly Concurrent Resolution 16 on the Assembly Floor to establish the Day of Remembrance on February 19 as an observance of the internment of Japanese Americans and Japanese permanent residents during World War II. The resolution passed unanimously.

“I am proud to have introduced this important resolution that pays respect to Japanese Americans who had their freedoms stripped and were forced to live as prisoners,” said Assemblymember Eng. “As we commemorate the Day of Remembrance, we must ensure that the civil liberties that this nation was founded on are upheld for all.”

On January 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which forced Japanese Americans and residents of Japanese descent into internment camps. Almost 29,000 of those incarcerated individuals were held at camps in California at Tule Lake and Manzanar. Commemorative events are still held at those former internment camp sites annually.

While their families were incarcerated and kept confined inside barbed wired fences, approximately 33,000 men of Japanese ancestry volunteered in the 100th Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion. These groups suffered nearly 10,000 casualties collectively and are honored as World War II’s most decorated combat teams. 6,000 veterans of Japanese ancestry also served with the Military Intelligence Service and are credited with shortening the war for their contributions in the service. Last year, President Obama granted the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

“My mother and father were incarcerated at Rohwer and Jerome, Arkansas. The internment camps were a direct violation of the very thing that Americans value most, democracy,” stated Assemblymember Warren T. Furutani (D-South LA County), chair of the API Legislative Caucus, “The internment of Japanese Americans must not lie in the dark and be buried underneath the dust but unearthed to remind us of our mistakes. With those mistakes in mind, we must continue in a path that ensures equality for all even in the midst of fear and confusion.”

The API Legislative Caucus was established in 2001 with the mission of representing and advocating for the interests of the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout California. Additionally, the Caucus seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government. Assemblymember Warren T. Furutani and Assemblymember Mary Hayashi serve as chair and vice-chair, respectively, of the caucus.

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